(b) There is no proposal to discontinue food subsidies.

(c) Some key essential commodities viz. wheat, rice, levy sugar, imported edible oils, kerosene, soft coke and controlled cloth are already being supplied through the Public Distribution System to the people, including the poor. A proposal has been made in the Speech of the Finance Minister presenting Central Government's budget for 1989-90 for a new programme for free distribution of saris to destitute women.

Difference in prices of grocery items at Super Bazar and Kendriya Bhandar Stores

1860. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CTVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that prices of grocery items at Super Bazar, are higher as compared to prices at Kendriya Bhandar Stores;

(b) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item published in Statesman of 10th February, 1989 under the caption "Prices Lower at Kendriya Bhandar";

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) Government's reaction thereto and steps taken in the matter?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D.L. BAITHA): (a) The rates of some of the grocery items (including pulses) in Kendriya Bhandar, some-time are lpwer than those in Super Bazar.

(b) to (d) The difference in the prices of pulses between those at Kendriya Bhandar and Super Bazar has attracted the attention of the management of the Super Bazar. Steps to maintain the prices of pulses at most competitive rates have already been taken by the Super Bazar, Delhi.

Rise in milk prices

1861. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the steep rise in milk prices and the statement made by P. R. O. of Mother Dairy as appeared in the Hindustan Times of the 13.1.89 that 90 per cent of cost paid by consumers goes to milk producers;

(b) whether Government would substentiate this statement specially since Mother Dairy is using on an average 70-80 per cent of imported low priced or gifted milk solids received as gifts or commercially; and

(c) whether it is a also a fact that price hike was due to losses and expenditure incurred by Mother Dairy on its another wasteful project of Fruits and Vegetables for which separate accounts are not being maintained ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) and (b) The Public Relations Officers (P.R.P.) Mother Dairy, Delhi, had stated that 90% of the cost paid by the consumers goes to the milk producers co-operatives. Mother Dairy procures the fresh milk from the State Cooperative Dairy Federations. The shortfall, if any, in procurement as compared to the demand from its vending outlets, is made up by recombining Skim Milk Powder and Butter Oil/Butter purchased from National Dairy Development Board's pooled stocks. These stocks include imported as well as indigenously produced commodities.